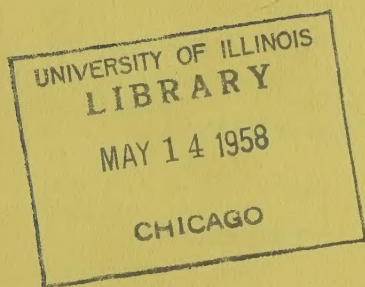


WINTER 1957-58



The
STEP
LADDER

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THE STEP LADDER is published quarterly by The Order of Bookfellows.
Price \$2 per year. Contributions are welcomed. Benjamin B. Richards, Editor.
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The STEP LADDER

"No author who has ever lived has shown such powers of insight into the variety of life — the differences, the contrasts, the collisions of persons and things and situations, each apprehended in its absolute uniqueness and conveyed with a degree of directness and a precision of concrete imagery to be found in no other writer. No one has ever excelled Tolstoy in expressing the specific flavour, the exact quality of a feeling — the degree of its 'oscillation', the ebb and flow, the minute movements . . ."

— ISAIAH BERLIN, *The Hedgehog and the Fox*.

VOL. 41, No. 3

WINTER 1957-58

GALESBURG, ILLINOIS

Charles Angoff
Department 14B
100 West 86th Street
New York 24, New York

A YEAR HAS MANY DAYS

A year has many days
And many more nights,
Whether you are young
Or old, or merely growing.
For by day all things are gray,
Only at night
Can one sense white
Or even black or anything bright.

Some years are all morning,
That have a dream or two,
But little meaning.
Some years are all noon
That end all too soon.
Some years are all evening;
They have identity,
But it can be found only
In eternity.

Time is the morning
Of every year,
And hope,
The afternoon.
And love is the night
When one senses white
And sees everything bright.

Jimm Dakin
North Rochester, Massachusetts

ILLUSION OF OUTREACHINGNESS
(*Field at Arles — a canvas by Van Gogh*)

Did anything
really die in the Ark?
Answer me purple.

I have thought
the sudden colors
some men dream
are remembered knowing.

It is disconcerting
to find pictured grain
never grows quietly;
that rutting rock
still breathes heat
when day is done.

And solid
as the dream I live,
and crumpled into time,
a rampage of phantoms
tear at a nest of clouds.
Their eyes,
if things have eyes,
flash something nameless
by any look.

In the awareness
brush has set to growing;
and lean, from wind
and weight of winter,
a cypress shape
of taller thought
defies the lightning.

Samuel M. Sargent
Box 28
Vista, Missouri

WAGON TRAIN

Out of the bottoms the covered wagons moving,
Out of the grass that grows horseman-high,
That reaches up to the broad brimmed hat of a rider,
Up toward the blue of an unimprisoned sky.

Heavy the roll of a Conestoga wagon!
Heavy the stout wheels moving to the West!
Aimed for the outflung, unencumbered places,
Aimed for the highest, the beautiful and best!

Waiting are the hardships. Waiting are the dangers.
Waiting is the war cry shivering the dawn.
Stronger is the new land. Stronger is the free land
Off beyond horizons, and they all are drawn.

Peace is in the faces of the men and of the women.
Strength is in the spirit. Joy is in the heart.
As the Conestoga wagons, the heavy, rolling wagons,
Go moving to the sunset; to a place apart.

Reaching is the prairie. Boundless are its levels.
Endless is the new land, clear of bar and wall.
Everything is open. Nothing is in secret.
Off beyond horizons is a place for all.

And the Conestoga wagons, the heavy, tented wagons,
Are carrying no burden of the old and of the dead.
But just the love of freedom, And just the reach for freedom
And just the highest hopes of man . . . of man inspirited.

Beth Duvall Russell
R. D. #3
Baldwinsville, New York

STET

Some lyric lines I sent,
born without pain
or tears
or any agony
but out of years
of deep content:
and they came posting back to me
again and yet again.

and so I went
into a semi-cellar, where
from the insiders there
I stole the knife
to scratch some surface wounds.
I even made the rounds
and lacquered up a Past . . .
I paged my hair
and held forth wordily upon a vast
amount of nebulæ,
exchanging inner sooth
with the precocious youth
and aging mimes (but noted ones)
who gathered nightly in the fog.

I grew another me:
I never mentioned raising fruits nor sons
and with no difference I wore my rue:
in mocking sinisterity I typed my log . . .
a check came winging back.

(I've ordered thumbscrews and a rack:
only suffering souls can feel,
only travail can be true.)

THIS I LOVE

Pure amethyst . . .
the word cannot be sung
because the ending
must be hissed:
but O, my tongue
delights to savor
this euphonic flavor
in the mauve!

I am defending
beauty of the Greek
so I will speak
my amethyst,
for this I love.

Lucy Cooper Summers
196 Cleveland Avenue
Hartford 5, Connecticut

SECURITY

Like new found ground
Under a two-year old,
I stepped out . . . onto
Each word you spoke,
Into . . . love's ether

PLEA

Gypsy clouds,
going to sun-shaft and wind,
let staid treetops
transfix you
for this hour.

Ruth Clay Price
840 Fairfield Circle
Pasadena, California

AMELIA EARHART

Head high in shining gallantry,
Gone in endless silence,
Consumed by her own courage.

Of loneliness defiant,
Her ultimate liveness was danger:
In the distance strange stars were burning;
She flew their beams uncharted;
Pioneering space unknown.

Some things by time are unfaded,
Time cannot touch the memory
Of her unidirectional wings!

MIGRATION CYCLE

Monarch butterflies emerge,
Each from its chrysalis, and verge
On life, then wait to feel its surge
Bring them that strangely haunting urge.

Nascent butterflies — freedom won —
Spread moist, close-pleated wings, fine-spun;
Face south beneath the northern sun
As for a flight not yet begun.

Through arctic Indian summer day
They spiral in ephemeral play;
When shadows seem to blue the way,
They fold bright wings as though to pray.

Across the autumn tundra, they sight
Mirage of sun-warmed pine delight
And lift strong wings in southward flight
Far from the endless winter night.

Red-brown, black-patterned wings enshrine
Some far, primordial design
That draws them in unchanging line,
Each year, to their ancestral pine.

In fluttering formation free,
Scenting the moss on distant tree,
Knowing only that change must be,
The monarchs wing toward the sunset sea.

The blue-green pines of Monterey
Have a butterfly blossom overlay,
Each tree is like a shaped bouquet,
Or rare design in cloisonné.

Winter storms cannot exhaust
The monarch butterflies, tempest-tossed.
The strong survive. The weak are lost,
And broken wings are patterned with frost.

In scent of sunbeams on wildflower air
The monarchs are mating, pair by pair,
Clinging to thistle-blossom flare
Or delicate leaf of the maidenhair.

Butterfly eggs, the milkweeds enfold,
Single pearls in silvery hold —
Striped caterpillar, masked and bold —
Jade chrysalis with ring of gold —

When spring's green coastal fires burn
On yerba buena and forest fern,
The wings of the monarchs quiver and yearn
For the northward flight — with no return.

Dorothy Cowles Pinkney
177 Rowayton Avenue
Rowayton, Connecticut

NIGHT REFLECTIONS

Little salt river, in your dark elation
Buttoned to bed with dandelion stars,
Beaded with street bulbs, flooded by
 passing cars,
For whom this spare-no-splendor celebration?
Prolonged pink streams from house lamps,
 rolled, unrolled
Over your faintly wrinkled, blueblack waters,
Are carpets fit to welcome a rajah's daughters,
Taxing his subjects pocketfuls of gold.
Against the ruby and emerald cast from
 crossings,
The open church disbursing all its light,
State gems and ceremonials have no standing.
We country kings don't hold with penny tossings:
Hail from a spendthrift village, Five Mile
 Landing,
Whoever it is, expected here tonight!

MORNING SALUTE

The morning sun makes old paints glisten pale,
Makes shining yachts of soiled, gray, peeling
 hulls,
Egrets and swans of common ducks and gulls.
Whitesided, polished bright, the line of sail
Staggering down the channelbed, swings round,
To eeling, trickling tideshift and to dawn.
There never was a lovelier liaison
Than morning boats in harbor. Wrecks aground
Let down their garments, naughtily sublime,
Shapely as maids, and every one a Venus!
Small boats and I have many a grudge between us —
Odors of bait and bilgewash, anchors in slime —
We wouldn't tell about. But have you seen us
Winking with rapture in the day's pure prime?

Archie Rosenhouse
172 North Normandie Avenue
Los Angeles 4, California

MARCH OF EMOTION

As undular pure air
Emotion fills and steers the child.
As prairie wind it tosses
Leaf-weight heart — wild.

With shoulders of will,
Youth contends and tethers,
But the howling whirlwind
Still batters stronger, faster.

In age emotion,
An exhausted storm,
With face a wrinkled debris,
Reposes and quiescently . . .
Dies into wisdom.

DESERT OF SAND

Primitive, shapeless, unnoted
Brown sands inhabit the dunes.

 A poppy, rare
As a humming bird,
Is treated to a breeze of dust,
To a murderous gust of sand.

 A venturesome hermit
Seeking unmanned dimensions,
Or a thief hunting refuge,
—— Each is trampled by hooves
Of the walking hills,
Rolled over, at leisure,
By carousing dunes.

 Desert sands tolerate no
Interlopers, but hold fast
To native barrenness.

INCOGNITO

I can not speak my joy
And pose, a ruffing peacock.
I can not speak my joy
And expose carpers to mouth-seizures.

I can not speak my sorrow
And germinate eyes of commiseration.
I can not speak my sorrow
And impose pain on unattuned ears.
I vault sorrow deep in the heart
And guard as one would a treasure.

Din and clamor
Of the self-revelation spoilers
Out-thunder the voices of my deeds.

I live incognito.

Lisa Grenelle
1335 Madison Avenue
New York, New York

UTRILLO

Derelict hotel, dilapidated hovel;
sordid shadows
turned by an innocent talent
to gaily painted homes of a child's imagining.

Lost boy staggers from bistro to bistro;
boisterous bouncer, the benign proprietor.

A bid for the picture, Monsieur? . . .
vin ordinaire, a bowl of soup
to still the belly?

Hunger's ugly hurt evaporates,
a late patron pauses to loose
gross, gray days in white light.

Antoni Gronowicz
132 East 82nd Street
New York 28, New York

JOY

The plains rise on the wild wind whirring
Across the sky our chargers plunge foamed breath outstreaming
The hedges wake — the vibrant thicket spins
Where butterflies new-stirring
Clap the miraculous sight with rainbowed wings.

On heavenly steeds we gallop
Stables of cloud behind us
Stallions of heaven our mounts.

No inns shall harbor us
No crosses threaten
Who see but our own hearts in this sweet sod
Nor grope
For better faith than this togetherness
Wherein belief has scope
Sufficing.

What matters earth
What matter men
For us what heaven?
Outrunning time we are ourselves infinity
Who with our love allreaching
From our two beings take
Beauty
To make
Divinity!

H. Wayne Morgan
10663 Rochester Avenue
Los Angeles 24, California

LINES FROM A DEALER IN ANTIQUES

Here from within the cornucopia of Time
we place at your disposal, within the reach
of every man, these moments once lost to Time
but found again:
Here a smiling music box repeats a fragile tune;
there an ageless satyr pursues a perfect nymph
through china forests, green and red and gold,
forever pure and clear.
From within its walnut wisdom, dark with many
memories, an aged rocking chair recalls
a former occupant and nods a greeting
toward the passing air.
And a golden age of memories in daguerrotype stares
feathered and mustached from amber eyes
at the follies of the impatient hands
that hurry idly by.
You come in search of Yesterday? To find, perhaps,
your maiden aunt; the roguish uncle gone astray?
Or Tomorrow's promise, carved in jade
and hidden cleverly from sight?
Not knowing that Tomorrow's works are known;
that even now ambitious plans are set to quickly
catalogue and place upon display
its few enduring works?

THE MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

Sharp eyed dragons, extinct yet alive,
born of eternity and fed on fire,
do I imagine or do you stare
and lift your paws restlessly
against these glass walls,
hating a time that cruelly bound you in
before your final leap, your final flame?

Dinosaurs, huge of body and small of mind,
were your dry bones alive with marrow,
clothed with flesh, wired with nerves?
You who in our imaginings munch imagined grass,
do you recall the lumbrous joys of hunt,
the cumbrous mating dance
that final foggy dawn before the end?

And you fair gazelle, hiding under a Latin
pseudonym, ambassadress from a distant age,
did you once dance as do your daughters now;
dance fleetingly before the great ice sheet
broke your feet and made a has-been of you?

Fallen idols, former kings and gods —
do you here in the quiet of the night,
when none remain to watch,
rear your heads proudly as of old,
remembering the fire and heat and hunt,
building bridges in time —
Paleozoic, Mesozoic, Cenozoic?

What of us who pass you by?
Who buy our tickets for a dime —
Johnny, Jack and Jill and Auntie Bea —
who point with parasols and candy canes
at your faded majesty, who smile and say:
"It cannot be, they could not be"?
If we remember you, will you remember us?

D. M. Pettinella
29 Washington Square
New York 11, New York

NOCTURNE

A pale moon kindles sparkling lights
On the shining pond — mirror of golden glories
Everything sleeps, only a nightingale sings
Its tender song in plaintive mood.

The wind is motionless within the green
Mystery of branches. Night sounds are silenced by the moon.
Amid the doleful semi-open leaves
Rain the kisses of the silent stars.

The old voluptuousness, dreaming about death
Puts the soul of things to sleep around the pond.
The forest scarcely moves, timidly
Shivering in its metamorphosis.

Each leaf is blurred in thin grey mist,
The blue of the sky seeps into the dew;
Pearl crystals cover the pistils
Of the nenufars afloat on the flowered surface.

The black is void — no flight, no wind, no voice:
From the distant wood a turbulent brook
Tumbles softly on the gravel,
Its echo sounding as the water falls.

NOCTURNE
STUART MERRILL
(*From Les Gammes*)

La blême lune allume en la mare qui luit,
Miroir des gloires d'or, un émoi d'incendie,
Tout dort. Seul, a mi-mort, un rossignol de nuit
Module en mal d'amour sa molle mélodie.

Plus ne vibrent les vents en le mystère vert
Des ramures. La lune a tu leurs voix nocturnes:
Mais à travers le deuil du feuillage entr'ouvert
Pleuvent les bleus baisers des astres taciturnes.

La vieille volupté de rêver à la mort
A l'entour de la mare endort l'âme des choses.
A peine la forêt parfois fait-elle effort
Sous le frisson furtif de ses métamorphoses.

Chaque feuille s'efface en des brouillards subtils.
Du zénith de l'azur ruisselle la rosée
Dont le cristal s'incruste en perles aux pistils
Des nénufars flottant sur l'eau fleurdelisée.

Rien n'émane du noir, ni vol, ne vent, ni voix,
Sauf lorsqu'au loin des bois, par soudaines saccades,
Un ruisseau turbulent croule sur le gravois:
L'écho s'émeut alors de l'éclat des cascades.

AT THE PLANTATION

Asleep on the terrace, the young señora dreams,
Surrounded by mestizos. The night
Approaches fast — the valley darkens
With the towering mountain.

Insects flash on the creeping grass;
As negroes return from their reaping.
The echo of their monotonous chant
Dies slowly as they disappear.

Naked children run restlessly
Along the brick-walled terrace
Chasing large black butterflies.

The moon is risen, the sabiá is singing,
The lowing of the cattle streams
From the semi-open doors of the stable.

NA ROÇA

ANTONIO CANDIDO GONCALVES CRESPO
(*From "Miniaturas"*)

Cercada de mestiças no terreiro,
Cisma a Senhora Moça; vem descendo
A noite, e pouco e pouco escurecendo
O vale umbroso e o monte sobranceiro.

Brilham insetos no capim rasteiro;
Vêm das matas o negros recolhendo;
Na longa estrada ecôa esmorecendo
O monotono canto do tropeiro.

Atrás das grandes, pardas borboletas,
Crianças nuas lá se vão inquietas
Na varanda correndo ladrilhada.

Desponta a lua; o sabiá gorgeia;
Enquanto às portas do curral ondeia
A mugidora fila da boiada.

Eugene Grossenheider
3645 Cleveland Avenue
St. Louis, Missouri

CAMOËNS

Feeble, forgotten, aged, ill and wan,
And not a sheet to cover him withal,
There lies the wasted figure of a man,
Great Camoëns, the star of Portugal.
Yet though the mouthpiece of his nation's power
Lies lone and sick, he singeth not in vain;
His mighty song in an ill-favored hour
Shall save his people from perfidious Spain.
His noble numbers by their alchemy
Rekindle hope, and fortitude, and pride;
Drive back the tide of alien tyranny,
And turn the flood of foreign foes aside.
Such is the strength on lofty verse bestowed —
The puissance of the epic and the ode.

RETRIBUTION

Fire-hearted Shelley, marked with many scars;
Frail cockle on the ocean of that age,
Whose clouded course no human art could gage,
Whose foaming wake was spread with splintered spars;
Strange blend of base and brave: soft pity wars
With scorn, what time we turn your life's limned page,
And Justice, chiding, reaches to assuage
The rising tide that tenderness unbars.

O holy wraith of Harriet, moan no more,
Lonely, athirst, unpitied, unappeased,
Around the sedges of the Serpentine:
See, where the tideless Mid-sea lifts his roar,
The Fury stoops — the man of sin is seized,
The scales of God rebalance and align.

Edward McNamee
147-37 Beech Avenue
Flushing 55, New York

THE DIGNIFIED AND THE DEAD

New dignity has come to me
that I have never known
it is in these hands
forever gentled
and in this now most patient breath
with arms and legs calmed down
from their unseemly fight
on life

the trees that whispered long to me
ignore me now
and even winds that often blew
against my heart
declare a long unending truce
while time that screamed its orders once
is frozen in its tracks
where every clock's once-fleeting hands
are stayed

the psychic ecstasies I knew
have faded in a fog of dreams
where I most gentlemanly lie
observing slumber's strictest protocol
and all the storms that break upon
this vulnerable earth
now pass me by with decency
where I return
life's cold aloofness
with a new proud disdain that is
my very own.

TENDER IS THE SOUL

To be born to go dreaming
Down this sad, mad, uncertain world's morning
To make much of happy noon-times
Filled with love, friendship, quiet communion,
And yet know nights
Of strange, everlasting, torturing hunger
That can never be assuaged.

Who knows what it is
That comes like a cry
Awakening him in the night
With the threat of some fearful promise,
The plaint of some sorely-aggrieved voice,
The report of some cruel destiny,
And the anguish of some long-unrequited love?

Who has seen the wounds
That life tears in human tenderness,
The long, red, bleeding fissures
Where the soul exudes
In eternal drips for laughs of the unfeeling?
Who has stood long where life stops and starts
With trivia that turns to monumental vastness
For the terror-trembled mind?
The spiders that spin gossamer
From their own bowels, are but symbols,
For they who too spin but unending torment
Out of their own sensitivity.

TO A GREEK-VASE LADY

Beauty of line entangles me
in that blue bas-relief
where you sit in some white arena
of the glittering Greeks.
Your garments gold-embroidered,
your face, a summation of all splendor,
and your smile mocking the very sun.

What orange-red furnace saw
its annealing harden
this sanctioning of svelte symmetry
that swims pink curves through your attire?
Who proselytizes for the fabulous East —
those baubles whose affections glow
in passionate parading
on your arms and breast?

O cultivated elegance and chic,
the perfume of your sunlit locks
tissues my imaginings till I hear
the acclaim of beauty-busy Greeks.
And we are all committed
to this sleight of time
that gulfs us in infatuation's folly
where dreams are but smoke from old fires
back in remotest ages.

Emilie Glen
28 East 10th Street
New York, New York

SUN TOP

Sun's a golden top
Spinning the pink plaster wall
Point poising, full rounding
Singing the street sounds
No Vermeer sun
Still as the blue jug, the pewter bowl
Respecting the housewife's blue white cap
Golden sun top
Spinning pink plaster to spore dust
Dizzying out, away

SEA SCIENCE

Feet bare in sea wash
To know the sea,
Ears, shells holding sea sound,
Drawing it into spiraled depths,
Brain dwells in the shell
To devour the sea,
How it breaks on the shore,
What beat? What measure?
What undertones, overtones?
How phrased, accented?
How scored, this confusion of waters?
What is the pattern, the sound pattern,
This day, this hour, this minute?

I stand in barefoot wonder
That the world knows so much,
Facts built like coral reefs
To the surface of knowing —
What the moon is to the sea,
The expanding universe,
The life of the tide line,
Whirling atoms, perseids
Not a law comes of standing in sea wash,
No particular law,
Just that *God is*.

Ryah Tumarkin Goodman
15 Hancock Road
Brookline, Massachusetts

THE SEA OF IRIS IN YOUR EYES

The sea of iris in your eyes
Clusters my sky with peacock blue petals,
Floating the bud of your being
Onto a flowering sea.

Flow slowly, my blossom
Into the foliage waters,
Flow as the vigorous sap
Through chrysolite fronds.
To the summer sun flow
Through the brine of my tears.

Billows of pear petals
Harden to spears in the air.

Soft in the barbarous air
Peacock blue petals press
Pear points of tremulous scent
On my eyes.

SILENCE SPOKE WITH YOUR VOICE

Silence spoke with your voice
As you slept.
Silence kept
Your singing voice
Locked in the cell of sleep.
Yet when you woke
Your orchard voice
Was warm as summer seas,
And silence, cold as a crow
On the bough of night
Perched on the spray of speech.

PETAL BY PETAL YOU UNFOLD

Delicately
Petal by petal you unfold
In the marigold
Air. My touch on your stem
Stills the quivering gleam
Of your leaf, opal of pearl,
Orient calm in my palm.

Cover my palm with the shadow
And brilliant green glow
Of your leaf. I would know
The rage and calm of your leaf,
The curve of each petal of grief,
As each granule of sand
Is known to the sapphire strand
Of the sea.

Katherine Thayer Hobson
27 West 67th Street
New York 23, New York

"AND HE SAID: BRING ME UP SAMUEL"

By my secret powers I call
Upon even you
Prophet of Jahve!

Trembling before God's Anointed
Who, heart sore, battleworn,
Comes disguised by night.

This final hour breeds strange justice
When the stern judge
Turns to witch magic!

Rise up now from shades of Sheol
And utter the doom
I dare not whisper:

That the breath of defeat is death,
Sweeping Saul's House
Down into darkness.

Willis Eberman
11015 N.W. Copeland Street
Portland 1, Oregon

THE WEB

Warmer than many a man, I watch the wood-smoke
wafting from country chimneys over orchard;
over disheveled fields the blue smoke flying,
merging with cloudy sunlight . . . An autumn spider,
gold-speckled, catches the willow, flinging, clinging,
threading the branches . . . One forgotten bee,
yellow and black, enters the small bush flowers.

Now, through the started web, the laurels standing
Staunch beyond summer, leaves like shards of emerald
above the field's gold filigree of grasses: . . .
round goes the speckled weaver, stitching, threading,
round and around toward the final center,
drawing the silver from its amber body:
amber and black and silver industry,
under a light and shaking autumn breeze.

Then, at the center, resting from its work,
pausing but briefly; — climbing to work again,
tacking the filmy sail against the air: —
it is, at last completed. Now the sun
glints through the web as through a perfect glass;
and on the small and motionless creator,
crouched at the center. And the sunlight leans
beyond the web, on broken strings of grasses:
the field, the ruined harp of summer's singing,
silent, forsaken . . . Like a dream of summer,
drifts the wood-smoke above the tawny country.

George Scott Gleason
510 Dorsey Avenue
Essex, Baltimore 21, Maryland

THE DESERT

One cannot decimate,
Cannot be rid of it in any direction.
On it sweeps,
On it runs
Like an immense, wide-flowing river.

Beneath its dust-rolled hooves,
Bovinely it lows,
It stampedes,
It goes loosened and wild.

Never satiate,
Never content but ever wandering,
It rises dramatically to the occasion.
It thunders on
Like an immense, devouring sea.

THE PIONEER

He became a brother to the forest,
On through its trails he wandered free.
From trunk upward to leaf-green dome, he knew
The architecture of its tree.

This the charred, this the stump-dotted terrain
That once felt the blow of an axe;
He plowed till dog-tired and rabbit-hungry,
Growing lush corn and stalwart flax.

He passed alerted, passed gunning-day glad.
Avidly he paused without doubt
And parted the leaf, through the green to see
An antlered head look wildly out.

Pioneer fiercely he braved the frontier.
While en route dutifully bent,
The Biblical hills echoed his footfall,
Courage prevailed — there where he went.

Joseph Payne Brennan
55 Trumbull Street
New Haven 10, Connecticut

LEAF PEACE

The old forest in autumn
Soaked with its million dead leaves,
Offering long silences,
Muffling the rack of the wind,
Waits like a shrine for our sorrow.
In this wet and ancient place
Grief is taken into time.
A sea of bleached and fallen leaves
Transforms despair to stoic peace.

THE SNOW WISH

So many of us
White splendid poems about the snow —
Sweeping so softly in the wintry wood,
Muffling the sound of the hare and the doe,
Frilling the branch with feathery lace —
Is it simple love of falling snow?
Or is it a childhood-pointing wish?
A death wish? A dream of oblivion?
We are tired, I think. We ache for rest;
We dream of sleep and dark returnings.
We would escape to a magic wood of snow,
Be hidden forever with the hare and the doe.

James Binney
503 Marshall Drive
West Chester, Pennsylvania

STILL LET THE MOCKING BE

Let mocking be and sing life's wine
which is the blood of years, and more than song,
while yet reviving earth breeds corn and vine,
let terror pass — tomorrow's wrong,
promise of chaos in a coming hour
when lily atoms shape atomic power.

Let mocking be, a new day comes
as certain as a word we understand;
the dew is off the leaf, why be the ones
to count the well-known lecheries of man,
or play the morbid souls who in their fears
weep for their own deaths in this morning's tears.

Lillian P. Curtis
Essex Road
R.F.D. Ipswich, Massachusetts

THESE GRIEFS OF YOURS

These griefs of yours are tightly bound and tied
With light long lengths of burnished woman-hair;
In throes of manhood hitherto denied
They rent your smiles with barbs of jagged care,
While I, for too-belated thought, have wept
to see you wading heart high through my tears
While yours have been restrained and cruelly kept
Behind a dam of wisdom in your years!
You! Cold in hurt, scarce knowing what to burn
For warmth on losing heat my heart withstood
Have felt that flame in which the anguished turn
To blunt love's razored edge by splitting wood.
Where reticence has served to make you kind
My own has been defense and made me blind.

Mabel MacDonald Carver
39 Fifth Avenue
New York, New York

IOWA GRACKLES

A slender, boat-tailed, purple grackle,
 between corn-rows
 struts and preens himself,
voicing a satisfied low cackle,
pecking a ripened cob with gleeful stealth.

His partner in pilfering likes, too,
the sweet, wet taste of milky ear.
At the edge of the field he waits,
biding his time, a sophist chanticleer
pirouetting with cocksure bravado.

Suddenly ricocheting bullets spatter
 a hot-blue summer sky
dark with frightened, raucous chatter
 of grackles on the fly . . .
Now wind-blown feathers of breast, wing, head,
drift earthward; purple stained with red.

Two birds, petty larcenists
whom death miraculously evaded,
hide; calm, cool and unrepentant
 in scorch of midday sun,
 cornstalk shaded.

Mariana B. Davenport
Cove View Avenue
Riverside, Connecticut

STORM AND STARS

The storm sweeps in tonight, abrupt and wild,
And cold above your sleeping head, small child,
The moon is hidden and the dark winds blow.
I watch you, hoping one day you will know
That skies where sudden sleet and snow may form,
Where winds rise on the quick and violent storm,
Can also hold the stars in quiet keeping.
This is the wish I make — now, as you're sleeping —
That you will learn to watch the arching skies,
And so discover how the moon will rise
Behind the cloud; and find, to your delight,
That storm and stars are both a part of night.

Eva Hall Cowgill
Wooden Hawke Farm
Easton, Maryland

THE GAUGUIN *PAYSAGE DE LA MARTINIQUE*

Cerise-rose lava, hardened,
stripes an aged slope, ungardened,
of lime and Paris greens;
growth screens

the Governor General's palace
viewing peak-topped tumbled valleys;
the darkening cobalt ocean
gains motion.

Fire-fruited tree, lean and fight-worn,
game-cock under the whitethorn —
is their owner this side of the frame
also game?

For the times are no longer linear —
one sets an arrangement of zinnia
on the radio
below.

Painting in the collection of Mr. and Mrs. Alexander Maitland, Edinburgh.

Margie B. Boswell
2033 Wilshire Boulevard
Fort Worth 10, Texas

FLOWER, EVERLASTING

In idleness the vagabond reviews
The April buds of gardens in the past
When life was fresh. He dreamily pursues
The Springs in search of blossoms that the blast
Of Autumns leveled long ago. He set
No plants of action that the winds of age
Could not uproot. He finds no mignonette.
But no such vacant dreams concern the sage
Whose shrubs of enterprise no summer sun
Nor winter frost may foul nor undermine.
He dwells upon a foliage, well-spun:
The valiant rose and sturdy eglantine.
And seedling soils of life with balanced trust,
He grows no vine nor flower that drops to dust.



BOOKFELLOW NOTES:

It is with deep regret that I announce to the readers of THE STEP LADDER the death of George L. Haggard on December 13, 1957. Mr. Haggard was the lawyer chiefly responsible for transferring to Knox College the estate left by the founders of the Bookfellows, Mr. and Mrs. George S. Seymour. I met him first in 1951 to discuss the plans for Knox College to receive the Bookfellow request. Since that time we have had periodic meetings to talk about THE STEP LADDER, the purchase of books for the Knox Library, the literary prizes and scholarships made possible for the college by the Foundation, and other Bookfellow affairs.

BOOKS RECEIVED

• Lisa Grenelle, *No Light Evaded*, The Golden Quill Press, Francestown, New Hampshire, 1957. \$2.50.
• James H. Varty, *In Once Across His Town*, Big Mountain Press, 2679 South York, Denver 1, Colorado, 1957. \$2.75.
• Bruce D. Wilson, Jr., *Let The World Begin*, a collection of poems. Vantage Press, Inc., 12 W 31 Street, New York, N. Y., 1957. \$2.50.
• Elbert Cartee, *Verse Come, Verse served*. Bruce Humphries, Inc., Boston, 8 Melrose St., 1958. \$2.50.
• Edwin Schaller, *Enchanted Mesa*, a collection of sonnets. Vantage Press, Inc., 120 W. 31 Street, New York 1, N. Y. 1958. \$2.00.

Mr. Haggard was unfailingly interested in the educational fortunes of Knox College and he was always concerned in an idealistic yet practical way about THE STEP LADDER.

He became my cherished friend. He suffered a heart attack while he was speaking at a parent-teacher's meeting in Barrington, Illinois, where he and his wife were helping to make plans for a new high school. Besides his wife, he left four children, George, Jr., Holiday, Robin, and Laurie. On behalf of all THE STEP LADDER readers I send them our sincere sympathy.

• Sadie Fuller Seagrave, *Palette Of Words*, Dallas, Texas, The Book Craft, 1957. \$1.00.
• Helen Van Cleve, *The Gift*, (Songs To My Master). The Wings Press, P. O. Box 332, Mill Valley, California, 1958. \$2.75.
• Eugene E. Robinson, *Inspirations*, Vantage Press, Inc., 120 W. 31 Street, New York 1, N. Y. 1958. \$2.00.
• Wyche Reiter Hart, *The Golden Falcon*. Vantage Press, Inc., 120 W. 31 Street, New York 1, N. Y. \$2.00.
• Helen T. D. Robinson, *The Call of Life*. Bruce Humphries, Inc., 48 Melrose Street, Boston. \$2.75.

THE STEP LADDER CONTRIBUTORS FOR WINTER 1957-58

Charles Angoff	1	A Year Has Many Days
Jimm Dakin	2	Illusion of Outreachingness
Samuel M. Sargent	3	Wagon Train
Beth Duvall Russell	4	Stet
	5	This I Love
Lucy Cooper Summers	5	Security
	5	Plea
Ruth Clay Price	6	Amelia Earhart
	6-7	Migration Cycle
Dorothy Cowles Pinkney	8	Night Reflections
	8	Morning Salute
Archie Rosenhouse	9	March of Emotion
	9	Desert of Sand
	10	Incognito
Lisa Grenelle	10	Utrillo
Antoni Gronowicz	11	Joy
H. Wayne Morgan	12	Lines From a Dealer in Antiques
	13	The Museum of Natural History
D. M. Pettinella	14-15	Nocturne
	16	At the Plantation
	16	Na Roca
Eugene Grossenheider	17	Camoëns
	17	Retribution
Edward McNamee	18	The Dignified and the Dead
	19	Tender is the Soul
	20	To a Greek-Vase Lady
Emilie Glenn	21	Sun Top
	21	Sea Science
Ryah Tumarkin Goodman	22	The Sea of Iris in Your Eyes
	22	Silence Spoke With Your Voice
	23	Petal by Petal You Unfold
Katherine Thayer Hobson	23	"And He Said: Bring Me Up Samuel"
Willis Eberman	24	The Web
George Scott Gleason	25	The Desert
	25	The Pioneer
Joseph Payne Brennan	26	Leaf Peace
	26	The Snow Wish
James Binney	27	Still Let the Mocking Be
Lillian P. Curtis	27	These Griefs of Yours
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